

# The Religious Inquirer

## AND GOSPEL ANCHOR.

Devoted to the Exposition, Defence and Promulgation of the Christian Religion.

'THOU BRINGEST CERTAIN STRANGE THINGS TO OUR EARS—WE WOULD KNOW, THEREFORE, WHAT THESE THINGS MEAN.'

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### A SERMON,

BY J. BARBER, SOUTH CORINTH, N. Y.

Original.

Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of Heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase. Dan. iv. 37.

These are the words of the once proud and haughty king of Babylon. The kingdom, over which this haughty monarch ruled, had become wealthy and potent in arms. The pride and overgrown ambition of the people had rendered it the common enemy of mankind, and by their numbers and warlike skill, they were able to subdue and cruelly oppress their cotemporaries. That all nations did actually bend under the burden of the Babylonian yoke, is a fact well established by the records of antiquity. The power and extent of that great monarchy is acknowledged by Daniel in his words to Belshazzar. 'O thou king,' says Daniel to Belshazzar, 'the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, a kingdom and majesty, and glory, and honor: and for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him. Whom he would, he slew, and whom he would he kept alive.' The rage for conquest, exercised by this haughty power—the wealth accumulated by subjecting the surrounding nations to this monarch, were well calculated to engender in the bosom of frail mortal man unbounded pride and arrogance. The impious demand of this overgrown monarch, for the people, nations and languages, under his wide spread dominion, to fall down and worship the golden image which he had built on the plains of Dura, is a lucid demonstration of his unbounded pride and domination. But that God, who rules in the armies of heaven and among earth's inhabitants—in whose hand is the heart of the king—who turneth it as the rivers of water, whithersoever he will—found no trouble in humbling his pride and inducing him to praise, honor and extol the King of heaven. Even the proud heart of a Nebuchadnezzar could easily be humbled and made to acknowledge the

Most High God, by the purifying skill of him who said to the Jews by the mouth of the prophet, 'Come let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'

The free agency of man is thought by many to counteract the strong arm of Jehovah. But the inquirer after truth will see, by our text and context, that Jehovah is able to subdue the most rebellious heart, and make the proudest of monarchs bow to his sceptre and acknowledge him as the one Lord of all, whose 'kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion from generation to generation.' The chapter in which our text is found, is a proclamation which the king of Babylon made unto all people, nations and languages; and in this proclamation, he gives an account of the process by which his spirit was humbled and he was taught to acknowledge the God of heaven as the moral Governor of the world. He relates in this proclamation a dream, which he told to all of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans and soothsayers in his realm; none of which could interpret it. He at last called to him Daniel, the Jewish prophet, to whom he related his nocturnal vision, and from whom he received an explanation. The interpretation of the dream was that the king should be driven from among men—that he should have his dwelling among the beasts of the field, eat grass as oxen, be wet with the dew of heaven, until seven times should pass over him—till thou know, (says the prophet,) that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will—all of which he says came upon him. For at the end of twelve months, he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon—and said, 'Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of kingdom, by the might of my power and for the honors of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; the kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, [how long?] until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws. And at the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding

returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth forever and ever; whose dominion is an everlasting dominion and his kingdom from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him what doest thou?'

This is the humble acknowledgment of this once proud and haughty monarch—he is now willing to allow that there is a being before whom not merely himself, but all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing. Before his debasement, he thought himself a God—he now acknowledges himself a worm of the dust, as nothing, when compared with the Deity. He does not consider himself able to withstand God.

There is a very popular objection to the doctrine of the final restitution of all things, which is that the obstinacy of man cannot be humbled—his endless misery is a natural consequence of his obstinacy. It is admitted that it is the will or, at least, the desire of Deity, that all men should be saved—but the great difficulty lies in the obstinacy and depravity of the human heart. Now my dear hearer, we would inquire, if God found any difficulty in converting the proud, the haughty king of Babylon? And if this was a difficult case, do you really believe that our heavenly Parent will ever be thwarted? 'O yes,' says our Methodist or Arminian brother. We will produce a case from the last part of the 23d chapter of Matthew. There the compassionate Savior addresses the Jews in the following language, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under wings, and ye would not!' Here is an instance, says the objector, to the point. Here the Savior says he would have gathered them together, but they would not; and he fairly wept when he saw them rushing into the arms of destruction—in articulo mortis, as the physician would say, into the arms of death.)

You will recollect, my dear hearer, that a short time before our Savior was crucified, he told his disciples that his soul was sorrowful, even unto death; and he said to them, 'tarry ye here and watch with me.' And he went a little further and fell on his face and prayed, saying, 'O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.' The inspired penman tells us that Christ was made in all points like unto his brethren. Now it is not strange, that in view of the excruciating death



which he was about to suffer—when he saw the Jewish cross, and other implements of death in horrid array before him—his human feelings should recoil at the torture and agony of the cross—and that he should sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, in view of the moonless midnight of death which he must pass; and being governed by the impulse of the moment, it is not strange that he should pray, that, if it were possible, this bitter cup might pass from him. But is it probable, that he would have evaded this cup, if in his power, when he again took a broad survey of the great plan of redemption to be effected by his death? It is, we think, certain that the Savior wished to evade this death, only while taking an abstract view of it; for after the first prayer he returned and finding his disciples asleep, he 'saith unto Peter, What? could ye not watch with me one hour?—Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak.' Here he acknowledges that the *spirit* was willing, but the *flesh* weak. He went away again and prayed, saying, 'O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, *thy will be done.*' He prayed the third time, saying the same words. It is again evident that, all things considered, Christ did not wish to evade the death of the cross; for you well remember, my hearers, that, at the time the Savior was betrayed, one of the disciples struck off the ear of the high Priest's servant, and Christ commanded him to put his sword into its place, and adds—'Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled?' This proves, we think, that Christ did not wish on the whole to evade this death; he did not wish even to have his disciples endeavor to defend him—but he wished to have the scriptures fulfilled. His prayer, that the cup might, if possible, pass from him, was only an impulse of the moment; for he knew the scriptures—the designs of the Almighty Father of all, must be effected. Were it possible for any power to alter the One great designing mind, he would have removed this bitter cup of death from the parched lips of his own dear Son! And it was not for the want of power, that the Savior suffered himself to be crucified by the Jews. No; it was that he might effect the great plan of redemption. The Jews could not have taken his life against his will. He says, as recorded in the 10th of John, 'Therefore, doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again! By this you will be convinced that it was not a want of power which induced the Savior to give himself up to crucifixion—although he prayed that the cup of death, if it were possible might pass from him—that is, if it were consistent with the plans of infinite wisdom.

So in the case of Jerusalem. It was not for the want of power—that Christ did not gather the Jews together as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings—it was not for the want of power that he did not convert them to christianity—it was, because it was otherwise planned in the courses of infinite wisdom. For proof of this statement I would refer the hearer to the 12th of

John. It reads thus, 'but, though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him.' That the saying of Esaias, the prophet, might be fulfilled, which he spake, 'Lord, who hath believed our report? To whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?' Therefore they could not believe, because, that Esaias said again: He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart: that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, and be converted, and I should heal them.' Surely, the same power which blinded their eyes, could open them—the same hand which hardened their hearts, could soften them. But had their eyes been opened and their hearts softened, at this time, by these miracles of the Savior the word of the Lord, by the mouth of the prophet, would have been falsified.

The same proposition which I have here advanced is supported by the apostle Paul to the Romans. He says, 'What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for: but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded, according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear *unto this day.*' Notice, my hearer, he does not say that they never shall hear and see. No. If he did he would contradict himself before he gets through the chapter, for towards the last end of it he tells us, that these very reprobates—'all Israel, shall be saved.' God has given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear *unto this day.* (The old Calvinistic doctrine was, that they never should hear and see. But the most we can say, is that this doctrine and the apostle are at issue.) Had the preaching and miracles of Christ converted them while he was on earth, they would not have crucified the Savior, and the ancient prophecies would not have been fulfilled. Therefore when Christ wept over Jerusalem—he was, no doubt, impelled to it by the tender compassion of his sympathetic bosom, rather than by a wish to alter the wise plans of heaven. As he told his disciples respecting his own death, the *spirit* truly was ready, but the *flesh* is weak.

'We will illustrate our idea on this point by similitude, that we may not be misunderstood. A parent has a diseased child—his feelings towards the child are extremely tender. But for the benefit of the child he wishes to administer to it a very disgusting, nauseating medicine. He knows that the medicine will cure his little diseased offspring; yet when he comes to administer the dose, and sees the stomach of the little sufferer rise against the nauseating drug, he weeps and says, 'O my child, how gladly would I avoid giving you this sickening dose and heal you without it.' So our heavenly Father, if his wisdom had seen best to have raised the Jews and Gentiles to that state of blessedness which he has designed for them, without hardening their hearts, blinding their eyes and carrying them through the iron furnace of affliction, there is no question but what he would have done it, as infinite wisdom and power are never guilty of using any means to effect their purposes, but the best. The compassionate Savior, in view of the process through which the Jews must be carried to bring them to

God, wept, as weeps the tender mother over her child in view of the medical process through which it must be carried that it may be raised to health. And if the feelings of the Son of God were such as to cause him to weep over the temporal calamities and sufferings of the Jewish nation, what, think ye my hearers, would have been his sensations—the agonies of his sympathetic bosom—had he foreseen their endless misery?—had he believed in the doctrines of our modern churches?

Ah! says the objector, 'this is the very reason why he wept! If the Universalist doctrine be true, he had no reason to weep; for, according to their sentiment, these Jews will be just as well off in the future state as if they had never crucified the Lord of life and glory. If Universalism be true, it makes no kind of difference what we do, or what we suffer; we shall all be well off at last. If I believed this doctrine I would never weep at any thing.'

I shall answer this objection by admitting that, if the doctrine of endless misery be true, every thing else—that is, all other misery—is of minor consequence, and when compared with endless misery, shrinks into nothing; and is not, as my opponent, says worth a tear. We do not wonder that the sincere believer in the doctrine of endless woe, looks upon all other misery as nothing—and feels as if, could he escape *this*, he would not care a fig about all the rest. If we believed it we think we should feel so ourselves. But notwithstanding this cogent argument of the objector, we think that his theory and practice will contradict each other. For we have seen many who professed to believe the doctrine of endless misery, who did not think that temporary misery was beneath their notice; and wept, as readily as others, at the earthly misery of their fellow creatures. And if those who believe the doctrine of endless woe, can weep for a temporary calamity, surely the Savior, who, we think, never believed nor taught such a sentiment, must be allowed to weep over the temporal judgments about to fall upon Jerusalem!! That the Savior did not believe that these Jews, over whom he wept, would be endlessly miserable, we will now endeavor to prove to you by the following context.

We will first quote the 37th verse, that the hearer may see the connection. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.' The next verse is, 'Behold your house is left unto you desolate;' and the next, 'For, I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord.' We wish you would mark this my hearer. These are the same Jews over whom he wept—the same to whom he said, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels'—the same whom he sentenced to everlasting punishment, or rather, as it should be rendered, the correction or judgment of the age. He told these Jews that, when they should see him again, they should say, 'Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord.' That God my dear hearers, who could bring the brethren of Joseph to do homage to



him in spite of their enmity, malice and hatred—who could humble the spirit of a Nebuchadnezzar and make him to extol and honor the King of heaven—that being who could convert a Saul of Tarsus to christianity; can find no trouble in making the most obdurate of the human family, bow to his sceptre and pay to him their voluntary homage. To say that God desires the final happiness of all mankind, and at the same time contend that he has given them a law which will prevent the salvation of a part, is in our view a contradiction in terms, or in language. If God ever *desired* the final salvation of all, when he made men; as he is unchangeable in his desires, and as his first desire was the best that could be, and forever precludes the idea of a different desire; it is an absolute incongruity—a contradiction in sentiment and principle, to suppose that he gave man a law which would preclude the possibility of an accomplishment of his own desires.—God is absolute Governor of the moral and natural world. As the Babylonian king declares in our text, 'his ways are judgment.' The word judgment we think is here used for discernment or decision—meaning that all God's works are works of wise discernment and decision.

The king acknowledges that God is a being of wise discernment, and that he is able to abase those who walk in pride. This the Babylonian monarch had learned by experience. Before his abasement, he had no knowledge of the one, only living and true God; for, in speaking of Daniel, the prophet, he says, 'in whom was the spirit of the holy Gods,' evidently alluding to the heathen deities, of which there were many. The hearer may at first, object to this statement; as at the time the three Jews who would not pay homage to his graven image, were bound and cast into his furnace, the king said, 'lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt: and the form of the fourth is like the son of God. Your speaker has sometimes been asked the question by the Deist, how the king of Babylon, he being a heathen and having no knowledge of God, should know that the form of the fourth was like the son of God? This difficulty my hearers, exists only in our translation. Mr. Webster, Lowth and other distinguished linguists, tell us that there should be an article in this place before the word God, and it should begin with a small g. The king's meaning is, that the fourth is like the son of a god—meaning, like the son of a heathen god, according to his notions of a god. After his abasement—after the king had been deprived of his reason & again recovered it—being forewarned of the whole in a vision of the night—he was then ready to inform himself concerning the true God, and probably by the instruction of Daniel, he became convinced that there was a superintending power to whom he was indebted for his dominion and earthly glory—who ruleth in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth—whose hand none can stay, and unto whom none can say what doest thou?

In the case of the Babylonian monarch we have my friends, a specimen or representation of human nature in general. Man is composed of such materials that a full tide of prosperity engenders in his bosom a spirit of independence and pride. He forgets in these moments, his entire dependence upon the great Giver of every blessing and

like the mighty monarch says in his heart. 'Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty? It is not only so in things of a temporal or secular nature, but also in the religious world. While mankind are in health, rolling along in the full tide of prosperity, it is then that they build a religious Babylon—a babel whose top reaches to heaven—it is then that they rely upon the strength of their own arm—it is then that, when asked to give a reason of the hope that is in them, we are referred to peculiar sensations—to a round of religious ceremonies—to a very lucid 'experience,' &c. &c. But when health fails, when pale sickness begins to undermine the vigor of the constitution, and the dread messenger comes up from the moonless, midnight, sombre shades of death, when the once bright eye grows cold and glassy, the world gradually recedes from the sight—it is then that our own works appear as a mere cobweb—it is then that our Babylonian spires and every aerial castle of our own building seem as nothing—it is then that our own merits, our boasted works of righteousness, vanish into thin air, and we are ready to say, with the humblest king of Babylon, 'before thee, O God all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing.' It is then that our hope is in the Lord. While man is in health and prosperity, 'pride compasseth him about as a chain'—then he feels himself elevated high in the scale of creation, a chosen vessel of his Father in heaven, destined to stand at the right hand of our God, in the eternal world, to the exclusion of a large proportion of his fellow creatures.

We are strongly of the opinion, my dear hearers, that pride keeps its hundreds, yea thousands, from embracing the doctrine of God's impartial goodness. The doctrine is too humiliating for the proud heart of man. He wishes to do something himself towards meriting heaven and happiness in the future world. There is something too simple in the idea of being saved wholly by grace. Like Naaman the Assyrian, who went to the prophet Elisha to be cleansed of his leprosy, men wish to do some great thing. The directions of the Prophet to Naaman were, 'Go and wash in Jordan seven times and thy flesh shall come to thee again and thou shalt be clean.' But Naaman was wroth, and went away and said, 'Behold I thought he will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place and recover the leper.' Naaman evidently wanted some great parade about it, he did not wish to be cured by so simple a process. 'Go wash in Jordan.' Any body could do that!

Ah, says the hearer; but Universalists do not hold to so much as that. They believe that mankind will be saved whether they 'go wash in Jordan or not.' Not so my dear friend. We believe that all mankind must be washed in the Jordan of God's love. John declares that 'God is love.' The Psalmist says the earth is full of water. He again says, 'O Lord how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches.' In the vision of the prophet Isaiah, he says the seraphim, which he saw cried, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. The sweet singer of Israel declares that 'all the ends of the earth shall re-

member; yes shall remember 'and turn unto the Lord,' that 'all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him.' We believe that God can effect this as well as humble the proud heart of a Nebuchadnezzar.

Proud man wishes to do some great thing himself, to do something more than he is recompensed for in this world. He is told to trust to the love and mercy of God for himself and the whole family of man. He asks if there is not something better?—if there is not another chance?

It was precisely so with the leper, Naaman. When Elisha told him 'Go wash in Jordan,'—it was quite too simple a process. Could the waters of Jordan heal him? Was there not something better? Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them and be clean? But the proud Chaldean monarch learned that God was able to abase those who walk in pride. The proud spirit of man must be brought down by affliction—this is the iron furnace in which he must be refined. God says to Israel by the mouth of the prophet, (Isaiah 48-10) 'Behold I have refined thee, but not with silver: I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.' The pride of nations as well as of individuals must be humbled in the same way. The Jews, God's chosen people, rolled on in wickedness until overtaken by the judgments of heaven—until they were plunged into the 'lowest hell'—until their national existence was destroyed. They were plunged into what is in the scriptures denominated everlasting fire. Think not my hearer that this fire is in another world because it is called everlasting. No; there are many things in our world which are called everlasting. We have no account in the scriptures of any everlasting fires for punishment in the future incorruptible state. There mankind are to be as the angels of God in heaven.

The Lord speaking by the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah says of himself, 'whose fire is in Zion and his furnace in Jerusalem.' He also said by the mouth of Jeremiah to the Jews (Jer. 17, 27,) 'But if ye will not hearken unto me to follow the sabbath day: and not to fear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day: then will I kind a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the places of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.' We wish you would notice where this fire was to be, which should not be quenched, in the gates of Jerusalem. God also told this same people, 'As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof, and ye shall know that I am the Lord. Here we have it. Here is the object of this fire—here is the object of punishment.' And ye shall know that I am the Lord. The fire in Zion—the furnace in Jerusalem—the unquenchable fire in the gates of Jerusalem: and in fact all punishment is corrective designed to teach mankind that God is the Lord. And a knowledge of God is eternal life.

This was the design of Duty in the punishment brought upon the Chaldean monarch, ap—this punishment had the desired effect as does all punishment in the hand of him who ruleth in heaven. All these fiery dispensations from God our Father are the effect of love. 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.' Then do not let us, my hearers, repine under the chastening



hand of our Father; for in the very moment of our deepest miseries and afflictions, we are encircled in the arms of redeeming love. We may at all times and under all circumstances say with the Poet,

Within thy circling power I stand :  
On every side I find thy hand ;  
Awake, asleep, at home, abroad,  
I am surrounded still with God.

### Communications.

The following letter taken from Jefferson's Works, vol. 3. p 506, exhibits the religious character of the immortal author of the Declaration of Independence in quite a different light from that in which it has been viewed by some of the orthodox party. That Mr. Jefferson was a genuine and sincere christian, no one can doubt after reading this letter to Dr. Rush and the paper which accompanied it. His gigantic intellect soared far above the petty creeds of the day, and embraced the liberal and happy tenets of true christianity. I scarcely know an example which I would sooner hold up for the imitation of the rising generation than the whole life of this illustrious man.

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO DR. RUSH.

Washington, April 21, 1803.

DEAR SIR :

In some of the delightful conversations with you, in the evenings of 1798-99, and which served as an anodyne to the afflictions of the crisis through which our country was then laboring, the christian religion was sometimes our topic; and I then promised you, that, one day or other, I would give you my views of it. They are the result of a life of inquiry and reflection, and very different from that anti-christian system imputed to me by those who know nothing of my opinions. To the corruptions of Christianity I am indeed opposed; but not to the genuine precepts of Jesus himself. I am a christian, in the only sense in which he wished any one to be; sincerely attached to his doctrines, in preference to all others; ascribing to himself every human excellence; and believing he never claimed any other. All the short intervals since these conversations, when I could justifiably abstract my mind from public affairs, the subject has been under my contemplation. But the more I considered it, the more it expanded beyond the measure of either my time or information. In the moment of my late departure from Monticello, I received from Doctor Priestly his little treatise of 'Socrates and Jesus compared.' This being a section of the general view I had taken of the field, it became a subject of reflection while on the road, and unoccupied otherwise. The result was, to arrange in my mind a syllabus, or subline of such an estimate of the comparative merits of christianity, as I wished to see executed by some one of more leisure and information for the task, than myself.— This I now send you, as the only discharge of my promise I can probably ever execute. And in confiding it to you, I know it will not be exposed to the malignant perversions of those who make every word from me a text for new misrepresentations and calumnies. I am moreover averse to the communication of my religious tenets to the public; because it would countenance the presumption of those who have endeavored to draw

them before that tribunal, and to seduce public opinion to erect itself into that inquisition over the rights of conscience, which the laws have so justly prescribed. It behoves every man who values liberty of conscience for himself, to resist invasions of it in the case of others; or their case may, by charge of circumstances, become his own. It behoves him, too, in his own case, to give no example of concession, betraying the common right of independent opinion, by answering questions of faith, which the laws have left between God and himself. Accept my affectionate salutations.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

*'Syllabus of an estimate of the Merit of the doctrines of Jesus, compared with those of others, by Thomas Jefferson.'*

In a comparative view of the Ethics of the enlightened nations of antiquity, of the Jews, and of Jesus, no notice should be taken of the corruptions of reason among the ancients, to evil, the idolatry and superstition of the vulgar, nor of the corruptions of christianity by the learned among its professors.

Let a just view be taken of the moral principles inculcated by the most esteemed of the sects of ancient philosophy, or of their individuals; particularly Pythagoras, Socrates, Epicurus, Cicero, Epictetus, Seneca, Antonius.

I. Philosophers. 1. Their precepts related chiefly to ourselves, and the government of those passions which, unrestrained, would disturb our tranquility of mind. In this branch of philosophy they were really great.

2. In developing our duties to others, they were short and defective. They embraced, indeed, the circles of kindred and friends, and inculcated patriotism, or the love of our country in the aggregate, as a primary obligation; towards our neighbors and countrymen they taught justice, but scarcely viewed them as within the circle of benevolence. Still less have they inculcated peace, charity, and love to our fellow men, or embraced with benevolence the whole family of mankind.

II. Jews. 1. Their system was Deism; that is, the belief in one only God. But their ideas of him and of his attributes were degrading and injurious.

2. Their Ethics were not only imperfect, but often irreconcilable with the sound dictates of reason and morality, as they respect intercourse with those around us; and repulsive and anti-social, as respecting other nations. They needed reformation, therefore, in an eminent degree.

III. Jesus. In this state of things among the Jews, Jesus appeared. His parentage was obscure; his condition poor; his education null; his natural endowments great; his life correct and innocent; he was meek, benevolent, patient, firm, disinterested, and of the sublimest eloquence.

The disadvantages under which his doctrines appear are remarkable.

1. Like Socrates and Epictetus, he wrote nothing himself.

2. But he had not, like them, a Xenophon or an Arrian to write for him. I name not Plato, who only used the name of Socrates to cover the whimsies of his own brain. On the contrary, all he learned of his country, entrenched in its power and riches, were opposed to him, lest his labors

should undermine their advantages; and the committing to writing his life and doctrines fell on unlettered and ignorant men; who wrote, too, from memory, and not till long after the transactions had passed.

3. According to the ordinary fate of those who attempt to enlighten and reform mankind, he fell an early victim to the jealousy and combination of the altar and the throne, at about thirty-three years of age, his reason having not yet attained the maximum of its energy, nor the course of his preaching, which was but of three years at most, presented occasions for developing a complete system of morals.

4. Hence the doctrines which he really delivered were defective as a whole, and fragments only of what he did deliver have come to us, mutilated, misstated, and often unintelligible.

5. They have been still more disfigured by the corruptions of schismatizing followers, who have found an interest in sophisticating and perverting the simple doctrines he taught, by engrafting on them the mysticisms of a Grecian sophist, frittering them into subtleties, and obscuring them with jargon, until they have caused good men to reject the whole in disgust, and to view Jesus himself as an imposter.

Notwithstanding these disadvantages, a system of morals is presented to us, which, if filled up in the style and spirit of the rich fragments he left us, would be the most perfect and sublime that has ever been taught by man.

The question of his being a member of the Godhead, or in direct communication with it, claimed for him by some of his followers, and denied by others, is foreign to the present view; which is mainly an estimate of the intrinsic merit of his doctrines.

1. He corrected the Deism of the Jews, confirming them in their belief of one only God, and giving them juster notions of his attributes and government.

2. His moral doctrines, relating to kindred and friends, were more pure and perfect than those of the most correct of the philosophers, and greatly more so than those of the Jews; and they went far beyond both in inculcating universal philanthropy, not only to kindred and friends, to neighbors and countrymen, but to all mankind, gathering all into one family, under the bonds of love, charity, peace, common wants, and common aids. A development of this head will evince the peculiar superiority of the system of Jesus over all others.

3. The precepts of philosophy, and of the Hebrew code, laid hold of actions only. He pushed his scrutinies into the heart of man; erected his tribunal in the region of his thoughts, and purified the waters at the fountain head.

4. He taught, emphatically, the doctrine of a future state, which was either doubted, or disbelieved by the Jews; and wielded it with efficacy, as an important incentive, supplementary to the other motives to moral conduct.

'O fear the Lord, therefore, all the days of thy life, and walk in the paths which he hath opened before thee. Let prudence admonish thee, let temperance restrain, let justice guide thy hand, benevolence warm thy heart, and



gratitude to Heaven inspire thee with devotion. These shall give thee happiness in thy present state, and bring thee to the mansions of eternal felicity in the paradise of God.'

## INQUIRER AND ANCHOR.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1835.

**DEDICATION.**—The new Universalist Church, in Troy N. Y. will be dedicated to the worship of the 'one only living and true God,' on Friday the eleventh day of September. Services to commence at two o'clock in the afternoon. Sermon by Br. I. D. Williamson, ministering brethren and friends, who can make it convenient, are invited to attend.

**CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.**—We perceive from a late number of the 'Trumpet,' that a strong effort is being made in Massachusetts, for abolishing capital punishment in that ancient commonwealth. This is as it should be.—Along with the stately goings forth of the truth, as it is in Jesus, we are glad to see, a spirit of benevolence, (which we might naturally expect,) at work moulding the hearts of the people into the merciful image of Christ. We hope the holy breathings of that spirit of clemency may continue, and extend, from heart to heart, from city to city, and nation to nation, until every relic of barbarism shall be expunged from the penal code of every nation. Aside from the absolute wickedness of the thing itself, there are in our opinion, many sore and grievous evils, which are entailed upon community, by the prevailing mode of inflicting a public, and ignominious death upon transgressors. Not the least among these, may be reckoned the deadening influence, that such exhibitions exert upon the moral sensibilities of the people. We know that man is the creature of habit, and his mind soon conforms itself to the circumstances with which it associates, and drinks in their spirit. A Physician, by habit, soon comes to look on sickness and pain with scarcely an emotion. The soldier in a short time by habit, gets so that he can look upon blood and carnage without a sigh or a tear, and mingle his laugh with the groans of the dying. An effect in some measure similar to this is produced upon the finer moral sensibilities of the multitude, who look upon the death of the malefactor. Suppose, for instance, a man was to be hung in our streets every day. How long would it be before those of the most delicate frame of mind would pass the gibbet with as much unconcern as they now pass the shambles of the butcher? We can tell by much what a little will do, and we risk nothing in saying that every execution brings the people one step nearer that state of morbid insensibility, in which they can see the life of a fellow, taken, with the most perfect indifference. We might press the question upon the advocates of capital punishment; whether such a state of feeling if gained, would not of all others, be the most unfavorable to the cause of virtue, and all those charities, and duties, which flow from the finer feelings of the heart? If yea; then why continue a practice that is leading the people by slow but constant steps, into that very state of mind?

By the way—speaking of capital punishment, reminds us of an argument in its favor, which we once heard advanced; and as our readers may like to hear arguments, pro and con, we will lay it before them. We were travelling in the stage in the western part New York, in company with an Episcopalian clergyman of some note, and in the course of conversation we hit upon the subject of capital punishment, of which we found him a staunch advocate. Among the most prominent arguments in its favor he urged the hypothesis, that it was benefit to the culprit. Whereas those who were imprisoned for life generally remained hardened and impenitent; those who

were executed generally gave evidence of piety, and assurance that they were saved. Our reply was briefly, that it might be a question whether repentance, even if genuine, was the means of saving men from an endless hell; and it might be a still greater question whether repentance produced by the fear of the gallows was genuine. But allowing the argument to be good, the best thing that could be done was, to erect a gallows in every village, let the Magistrates go to work sentencing the people to death, and we would have an universal revival, and then by hanging them off as soon as converted, we might do an incalculable amount of good, inasmuch as we might save the greater part.

But we have been wandering. We hope the efforts of the people in Massachusetts will be effectual, that a good and salutary example may be presented for others to follow. Fie, upon the notion that such a measure will encourage murderers, or increase the number of that kind of crimes. The history of the world, from Adam to the present moment, cannot furnish an instance, where crime of any kind, was increased by softening the rigor of laws, and breathing a spirit of mercy into the penal code. But it can give a thousand cases where an opposite course has filled community with crime.

I. D. W.

**PASTORS.**—In ancient times God promised to Israel, that he would give them pastors 'after his own heart,' who should feed them with knowledge, and with understanding.' The reader is aware that there is a class of men in our day who arrogate to themselves, and those like them the exclusive title of God's Ministers.' They preach the burning wrath of the great Eternal, and proclaim, day and night to the people, that his indignation is waxing exceedingly hot against them. At the same time they offer themselves as good men and true, tenderly devoted to the interests of the world. They love the precious immortal souls, and would spend & be spent, if they could pluck them as brands from the burning. Now we desire to ask one simple and plain question. If God is so very angry, and these ministers are so kind and loving, how can they claim to be men 'according to God's heart,' and if they are not, why call themselves God's Ministers? That's all.

I. D. W.

**LICENTIOUS TENDENCY.**—There are, no doubt, many Limitarians who would be favorably disposed towards Universalism were it not for its supposed licentious tendency. The belief that all men will finally be saved, they affirm and some perhaps sincerely believe it, is calculated to exert an unhappy influence upon society, removing all restraint and thus undermining the foundation of public morals. And on this ground they would not for the world advocate and support it, even if they believed it true.

Now it will be admitted that no doctrine has any influence upon the morals of men unless it is believed. A wicked man who is an unbeliever, can no more be influenced by Universalism than any other doctrine. Believers, only, are affected by the doctrines—and those alone, in which they believe. Suppose then a man believes in endless misery—it is not for himself, but for some one else. All believers in that doctrine—all at least who make a profession of religion—believe also, that they themselves will be saved. They have no faith in endless misery so far as themselves are concerned.—Consequently as a salutary restraint the doctrine can have no influence upon their conduct. What then restrains them from sin? Few are willing to admit that they are restrained, in any degree, by the fear of hell.—It is the goodness and mercy of God, as manifested in their salvation, or the provision made for their salvation which restrains them from sin and induces good morals, or a correct course of conduct. Why then will not the same faith, a faith in divine goodness and mercy manifested in individual salvation, exercise the same salutary

influence upon the morals of the believer, even though his faith extend, so as to embrace all in the purchased possession? We cannot discover wherein that individual's faith, who believes that he shall be saved and his neighbor damned, is any more salutary in its influence upon his conduct, than if he believed that he should be saved and his neighbor also. So long as he does not believe that he himself will be damned, that sentiment cannot effect his conduct. Every inducement to good morals is drawn from the same source; as if he believed in the final salvation of all men. The same is true of each individual who believes in the final salvation of himself. Where then is the advantage of endless misery in promoting the morals of community? or where the evils of Universalism in leading to a declension of morals? So long as the goodness and mercy of God, as manifested in the salvation of men, have a salutary tendency, so long the tendency of Universalism must be good—so long the doctrine will exercise a happy influence upon the conduct of all those who believe it.

R. O. W.

**A CHARGE OF ERROR.**—Limitarians are constantly charging Universalists with holding and promulgating error in embracing and preaching the doctrine of the final salvation of all men. And yet they would consider themselves slandered, if it were said they did not pray for the truth of that very sentiment. 'Oh!' they exclaim, 'we earnestly pray that all mankind may be brought to repentance and enjoy the presence of God through all eternity.' Now if it is an error for us to preach the doctrine, it is certainly an error for them to pray it. And what is worse, theirs is an error of the heart, while ours is an error of the head only. We pray for what we believe and delight in; and they pray for what they disbelieve and abominate. It is very painful, they say, for them to hear the doctrine preached—it is painful to see the world given over to the belief of it—it removes all restraint and confirms the wicked in their wickedness—and yet, with all the saintliness imaginable, they can pray for its truth! Does not the charge of error come with an ill grace from those who so earnestly pray for the repentance and final salvation of all men? Reader, 'judge ye.'

R. O. W.

**'DISTRESSING RELIGION.'**—This is the title of a brief editorial article that recently appeared in the Universalist Watchman, a paper published in Montpelier Vt. That our readers may understand the meaning of a 'distressing religion,' we copy the article for their perusal.

**DISTRESSING RELIGION.**—What sort of religion is that? It is such a religion as is obtained by much distress, and that distresses people very much after they get it. To we hear the different sects, boasting of their smart preachers—how by their preaching people are distressed and cry out in agony?—What name can be more proper for such a religion than the one we have given it? Things ought to be called by their right names. If the word Orthodox has been wrongfully applied to the prevailing religion of the day, suppose we give it such a name as its effects would most obviously suggest? We notice in almost every revival account that is published, how that more or less persons, about such a time, began to feel very bad, and their distress increased from day to day, until they become thoroughly wretched, that they could hold out no longer, and were finally glad to obtain relief by swallowing down that very poison, the fear of which so much distressed them. In almost every instance of conversion to the popular error of the day, the subject undergoes a certain preparatory process, which is called conviction (very distressing) after which they are entitled to all the joys which flow from a belief in endless misery.—This belief, where it is devoutly embraced, will diffuse itself into every period of life, rendering pleasure disgusting, food insipid, society tiresome, and life



itself a cruel burden. This is what we call a distressing religion.

This is truly a singular, but at same time a very popular religion. There are no doubt, many honest supporters of it, who do not view it in the same light as it is here presented. An illustration and confirmation of its most distressing features, however, may be found in the following extract of an article, entitled 'the two weddings, or the contrasts of grace.' The article was published in the September No. of the 'Home Missionary and American Pastors Journal,' a pamphlet issued periodically from the seat of the beast in Nassau street New York.

C. F. B. at the wedding of an elder sister, was one of the bride's maids; and, as young persons without religion commonly are, on such occasions, was full of gaiety and in high spirits. She was an elegant girl, educated, sensible, a respecter of religion, a child of many prayers: and sometimes in that seriousness of mood which showed that she was not at ease, always respecting the things between God and her own soul. On this occasion, however, there seemed to be no heart lighter than hers, in all the party.

We pass over six or seven years to her wedding day; and find C., the bride, a most interesting contrast to C., the bride's maid, in her whole state of mind, respecting religion. She had seen days and months of deep distress, in that acquaintance with her own heart, to which the Holy Spirit, by his convicting influences, brings the sinner.—Some of the expressions which had escaped from her pen, in a journal she kept, and which were like what fell from her lips, in the many conversations I had with her,—were the following noted at various dates:

Jan. 22d. 'Felt that mine was a lost and ruined condition.' Feb. 8.—'For the last two days have hated myself, and found fault with my Maker; felt myself all covered with sin, and traced him as the cause. What greater evidence can I have of my vileness in his sight? What must I do?' Feb. 11. 'I have been trying to search my heart, to know the cause of my distress. I am not satisfied with the doctrine of special grace, and God's sovereignty; still, believe the truth of them; but cannot submit to be in God's hands and at his disposal. If I was certain that God would save me then, how easy it would be to trust myself with him.' 'Sabbath.—Went to church all day, in a violent storm; and one more violent within. Tuesday night—was extremely anxious, and wept much on account of my sinfulness and helplessness.' 'Retired to bed: but not to rest:—wept sore for my sins,—but had no true repentance.' At several different times such words as the following appear. 'It is a comfortless day; nothing in the world to make me happy; and nothing in prospect for another, but the blackness of darkness forever.' O! that I never had been born!—What infinite mercy if God had taken my life when I had just entered the world. This was too great goodness. I deserve all, and all that I shall suffer in the regions of despair.'

The pastor who furnished this account states, here, that the young and beautiful 'C. F. B.' was greatly distressed during the season of getting religion. The happiness, vivacity, and innocent gaiety of the young lady's life, were clouded and broken up by the awful fear of a tremendous hell; and she was so far sunk in the depths of despair, as to wish, from the overflowing sorrow of her soul, that she had never been born! It is true that, afterwards, she is said to have got relief; but not until she had been a sufferer for a long time. The insatiate harpies that threw her into this condition by their terrific preaching, afraid that she would not suffer misery in another world, were not satisfied until they had grievously tormented her in this life. And even after a 'change came over the spirit of her dream'—for it was a mere dream, horrible indeed to think upon—it may be questioned whether she was as happy, as she had been previously. And how many there are who experience no

such change. Involved in the deep distress of a horrible religion, they spend their days in sorrow and unavailing efforts to catch a phantom, and die at length in deeper anguish! How many there are who, during the sad operation of getting religion, experience a wreck of reason, the loss of health, and finally sink to an untimely grave in despair of future bliss. Oh, if they could be certain that God would save them, they might then again be happy. But no; they are denied even this poor consolation.

It is truly a distressing religion which affords no hope for the sorrowing soul—no prospect for another world but the blackness of darkness forever! It is far different from the pure religion of Jesus Christ. It is astonishing that preachers preach or hearers hear, a system so adverse to the temporal well being of man. Were there less inhumanity in the world, there would, in all probability, be less effort for the propagation of a distressing religion. May God grant a speedy termination of such religion, and the more extensive influence of that which cometh from above.

R. O. W.

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT.—It is the most common thing in the world for infidels to abuse and slander christianity and its professors. Indeed, if they could not find fault, and exercise their ingenuity in attempting to refute christianity, they would have nothing to do; for their own system does not appear to afford matter enough to occupy their attention any thing near, all their time. But notwithstanding the continual war they wage upon it, they can hardly ever speak of it, without the tacit admission that it is the very thing which it claims to be.—They frequently condemn, in the most violent terms, the practice of professing christians, and attempt to show the inconsistency between their practice and their principles. Their practice is said to be bad—instances are pointed out in which this is the case—but the charge of inconsistency involves the acknowledgment that their principles are good. It seems to be admitted that, if christians would act strictly in accordance with the precepts of Jesus Christ—the principles laid down in that book which they profess to regard as a rule and guide in matters of faith and practice; they would be far better men they now are. This may be true; and if so, the doctrines and principles of christianity must be good.

In a recent number of an infidel paper that has come under our observation, a writer discharges an excess of the most bitter vituperation against clergymen. In his view, they are 'as a body, the most inconsistent, absurd, illiberal, intolerant, arrogant, proud, vindictive class of men in this and every other country, where they are looked up to with superstitious awe.' And in order to point out their inconsistency, the writer attempts to show how much their conduct is at variance with the principles inculcated by the 'meek and lowly Carpenter's Son.' We copy the following:—

I can't conceive how such men can claim to be disciples of the meek and lowly Carpenter's Son, or to set themselves up as the teachers of his precepts, when their spirit and conduct is so adverse to those precepts, and his conduct, as related in the book which they admit as their guide and rule of conduct. I do not hesitate to say, that those who act in this manner, are guilty of the most consummate impudence and impertinence.

With what propriety can they claim to be Christians? Does a mere profession, without a corresponding possession, and doing the will of God, instead of saying, Lord, Lord, we have prophesied in thy name; entitle them to the name? If it does, then every knave and gallow's bird, who hypocritically professes to believe the things contained in a book, which is the most incomprehensible one that I have any knowledge of, is a Christian. I cannot see how these very pious, reverend gentlemen can consider each other Christians, whilst they are traducing, vilifying and slandering one another, either in their assemblies, or in their pulpits, or in their falsely termed, Religious papers. Is such conduct the legitimate fruits and effects of a knowledge of the contents of

the bible? Is quarrelling and fighting, doing unto others as you would they should do unto you? Is this the way to love your enemies, and do good to them that hate you, and speak evil of you falsely? Is this setting a good example to the unconverted and infidels, to induce them to become converts to christianity? If they think so, I will tell them they have mistaken their calling, and they must retrace their steps and become consistent, or abandon their profession and their stations as messengers of Jesus, and successors of the apostles. Jesus would be ashamed of them—Paul would not acknowledge them as the retailers of his doctrine and precepts.

Now all these questions proceed on the ground that the Bible and christianity recognize, and allow of no such conduct as is here charged upon the clergy. Whether the charge is true or false, we need not now inquire.—They who complain so pitifully of being abused by christians, ought to look at home—and so far as we are concerned, they may pursue their way unmolested—we shall not retort; we may perhaps, occasionally just put them in mind of their admirable consistency. But allowing clergyman to be guilty of all that is here charged upon them, the writer acknowledges it to be contrary to the spirit and principles of the christian religion. 'Jesus would be ashamed of them—Paul would not acknowledge them as the retailers of his doctrine and precepts.' Very true! If they are so bad, Jesus would indeed be ashamed of them, because they so widely depart from his religion. They are not true christians, if these charges are just, for christians are meek, humble, benevolent, kind and charitable men.

Does not this writer see how far his bitterness towards the clergy goes to prove the goodness, excellency and moral worth of the christian religion? How far he bears testimony to its worth; and yet he calls it 'other peoples' fables, allegories legends!' A fine specimen of consistency and candor!

R. O. W.

SLEEP DURING PUBLIC WORSHIP.—This is an evil with which some congregations and some preachers are very much afflicted. Our attention has been called to the subject by a brief article from the Star and Universalist which we copy below. It is seldom our misfortune to see a lazy lounging haier sleeping, or be disturbed by his incessant snoring, during the hours of public worship. But to those who have the spirit of slumber, who are more disposed to pay their devotions to *Somnus* in the house of worship, than to the living God, we recommend an attentive perusal of the article below. And especially, if they wish to sleep in quiet, they should be careful to keep from under the gallery, lest peradventure, instead of the dews of divine grace, the 'great drops' of moistened tobacco should fall 'with soft slumbrous weight' into their extended mouth, and disturb their repose.

'AWAKE THOU THAT SLEEPEST.' Scripture.

We have a story to tell. It was related by a good old sober faced divine, somewhere—whether here or the other side of the Atlantic, we cannot tell—no matter; but the story is doubtless true. 'The only time,' said he 'that I ever smiled during public services in the house of God was on one occasion when an individual lay fast asleep in sermon time—his head leaned back on the top of the pew directly under the singing gallery, and his mouth wide open. He looked ridiculous, and was snoring somewhat audibly. Casting my eyes upward to the singing gallery, I perceived the chorister directly over the man's head, looking down intently upon him with something in his hand. It was a large quid of tobacco, which he had just taken from his mouth. Taking good aim he let drop the quid—it went into the sleeper's throat! He started on his feet, and such an object I had never seen before! I laughed outright! The congregation were utterly confounded, and



it was not until the affair had been soberly explained, that order was restored."

What an interesting sight this confused audience must have presented. Their chorister minus a quid of tobacco which had gone down the throat of a poor sleepy, worn out hearer, and the preacher enjoying a good broad laugh at their expense—and to his own surprise and that of the audience! Now all this was caused by that sinner who lay snoring, when he should have been awake.

The truth is, this sleeping during public service, is censurable, in the highest degree. It is an insult to a respectable audience, as well as to the preacher. We believe we can safely say that our Universalist congregations are generally free from this evil, while many who pretend to believe in the endless woe of millions of their fellow creatures, can sit and sleep, yes sleep, while this horrible sentiment is proclaimed by the mouth of the preacher!

Doctrine aside. To all preachers who are troubled with sleepy hearers; we will agree to tell them a remedy for the evil, if they will apply to us; and to all congregations who are troubled with sleepy preachers, we would say—either awake, or dismiss them.

A METHODIST QUESTION, OR TWO.—The following letter from Mr. G. Coles, of new hell memory has just come to hand. We insert it entire, and not having time to reply before the present number of our paper goes to press, we shall defer an answer until next week. At that time we shall endeavor to satisfy the gentleman of new light and new darkness, new whims and new ideas.

HARTFORD, AUG. 31, 1835.

Sir: On the supposition that you are right and all the rest of mankind wrong in respect to the belief of endless punishment, how do you reconcile that supposition with the justice and mercy of God, in keeping so great a part of mankind in ignorance and misery so long?

Yours respectfully,

R. O. WILLIAMS.

G. COLES.

P. S. The greater part of mankind, so far as I can learn, have some fear of punishment hereafter, how then comes it to pass that so few are delivered from this fear, on the supposition that there is no just ground for it? G. C.

### INFIDELITY IN DISGUISE.

Original.

It is a very common accusation brought against us by our limitarian brethren that we are infidels—that we have no faith in the sacred scriptures; and there are many who have taken no pains to inform themselves concerning the truth of this charge, but who, nevertheless consider it so well founded as to assert that we deny the Bible, or use it for no other purpose but to point out its contradictory parts. 'Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee?'

We had occasion, not long since, to visit the town of K. in the south part of this state, to preach unto the people the gospel of peace and salvation. A methodist clergyman, an eccentric STAR, who occasionally sheds forth the precious light of endless misery, in that place, wishing to do all he could to stay the progress of this 'heresy,' commenced an attack upon it from the pulpit. After a recapitulation of the good old objections, 'devil's doctrine,' 'infidelity,' 'heresy,' &c., being conscious of the fact that the Bible taught 'the restitution of all things,' he very gravely told his audience that 'we can prove any thing from the Bible!'. Is this christianity? If so, it exists only in

name. Did Abraham believe that we could 'prove' endless misery from the Bible, when he had the promise, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed? Abraham did not stagger at this promise, but he gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. He did not believe that we could 'prove' the endless torment of any person, for he believed that all nations would be blessed. Of course, before we can allow that the doctrine of an eternal separation between man and man, can be 'proved' from the Bible, we must prove that there is some person that belongs to no nation.

Now does not this preacher know that this is an acknowledgement on his part that the Bible is a mass of contradictions; and has he not conceded to the enemies of christianity, the very point which they have been so long contending for? Once let it be admitted that 'we can prove any thing from the Bible' which is a tacit acknowledgement that it is an inconsistent book, and it will require nothing more to destroy confidence in it, and to spread infidelity throughout the world.

The Bible may indeed seem contradictory to him: for he thinks it teaches the endless punishment of a part of God's children and the prophet says he 'will not contend forever, neither will he be always be wroth.' So here we see a dispute between the preacher and the Bible; yet this preacher would have us believe that this dispute is between one part of the Bible and the other, and thereby make us believe that 'we can prove any thing from the Bible.'

And now, reader, we hope you will learn the difference between christianity and infidelity, and not give your aid to infidelity under the mask of christianity.

J. S.

SUSPENSION REVOKED.—Some weeks since, a certificate was published in the Trumpet, over the signature of the Committee of Discipline appointed by the Massachusetts Convention of Universalists, in which notice was given of the suspension of Br. L. S. Everett from the fellowship of that body. The charges which induced the Committee of Discipline to take this step in relation to Br. Everett, were not named, but were doubtless considered sufficient to justify the course pursued. It would seem, however, from what follows, that a rehearing in the case has been had, and the Committee have seen cause, to revoke their former decision.

#### To all whom it may concern.

Whereas the Rev. LINUS S. EVERETT refused to appear before the Committee of Discipline for the Massachusetts Convention of Universalists, at his trial for *Unministerial Conduct*, whereof notice was published in the 'Trumpet' of July 18th ultimo; and he, after the publication of said notice, and of the decision on said occasion, having requested that the trial should be repeated; the said Committee granted him the privilege; and met at the Vestry of the First Universalist Society in Boston, Aug. 12, 1835, where the charge and evidence were again brought forward, and Rev. Br. Everett made his defence.

After a patient hearing of the whole, the Committee are of opinion that the acknowledgements and retractions which Br. Everett has made, on this occasion, of certain items in the charge, are satisfactory; and that the other items, when con-

sidered in all their circumstances, are subjects of admonition rather than disfellowship. The committee therefore do hereby revoke the suspension of the fellowship of the Massachusetts Convention of Universalists.

Signed, HOSEA BALLOU, } Committee  
HOSEA BALLOU, 2d, } of  
SYLVANUS COBB, } Discipline  
Boston, Aug. 12, 1835.

THE CONVENTION AND JUBILEE.—A few more days and 'thou shalt cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound.' We expect then to see our brethren 'from the north and the south, from the east and the west,' coming up to 'hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.' And we trust it will indeed 'be a Jubilee unto them.'

Ministering brethren, when they arrive in this city, are requested to call at the Connecticut Hotel in Maine street; or at the residence of the Junior Editor (Mr. Bennett's) over the Farmers and Mechanic's Bank, corner of State and Market Street—at each of which places preparations are made to receive them.

R. O. W.

### REMOVALS.

THE OFFICE of the Inquirer and Anchor in Hartford, is removed to the building formerly owned and occupied by Mr. N. Ruggles in Main St. a few rods south west of the State House square.

The office of the Inquirer and Anchor in Albany is removed to the room over E. Murdock's store, directly opposite the Eagle Tavern, South Market st.

### Religious Notices.

THE GENERAL CONVENTION of UNIVERSALISTS in the UNITED STATES will meet in annual session at this place (Hartford) on the evening preceding the third Wednesday [16th] of Sept. next. The council, according to the usual practice, will continue in session two days. We anticipate a pleasant and profitable session, and expect a full attendance of delegates and visiting brethren.

The Hudson River Association of Universalists, will hold its annual session in the city of Hudson, on the second Wednesday and Thursday, in Sept.

There will be preaching on the 1st sabbath in September, by Br. Shrigley at Winsted—by Br. Williams at Granby (and at Granville at 5 o'clock same day)—and by Br. Willis at Somers.

On the 2d sabbath in Sept. there will be preaching, by Br. M. Ballou at Barkhamsted—by Br. Williams at Poquonock—and by Br. Shrigley at Millington—Br. Shrigley will also preach a lecture at Hamburg on Saturday evening previous, and at Colchester on Sunday evening at half past 7 o'clock.

Br. Bugbee of Guilford Vt. will preach at Granby on the 3d Sabbath in Sept.

There will be preaching on the 3d sabbath at Broadbrook.

There will be preaching at Hitchcocksville on the third Sabbath inst.

There will be preaching at Durham on Friday evening 25th inst, at Killingworth on Sunday the 27th, and at Upper Middletown on Monday 28th.

There will be preaching at Northfield on the third Sabbath inst.

NOTICE. The next meeting of the Hartford County Temperance Society will be held in Hartford on the second Tuesday, the 8th day of September 1835. Delegates will meet in the Lecture Room of the 1st Society at 10 o'clock A. M. The Rev. Mr. Hunt will deliver an address in the Center Meeting House in the afternoon. Services to commence at 3 o'clock.  
D. HEMENWAY, Sec'y.



## POETRY.

## Infancy.

If there be perfect joy on earth,  
That seems from heaven to have its birth,  
It is to see,  
The bud that promises the rose,  
Its cradled sweetness soft uncloze,  
In Infancy.

Pure hours ! when all of life is light ?  
When clothed in robes of stainless white,  
The cherub lies :  
Beloved with holy tenderness,  
And watched by orbs it seems to bless,—  
A mother's eyes.

How richer far than summer bird,  
The lisping accents fondly heard,  
As days increase,  
When ripen meanings light the brow,  
And kind affection chanteth low  
Her songs of peace !

Oh ! blessed time, when every hour,  
Flies like the odour from the flower,  
Serene and free ;  
When every charm of life is new,  
And every scene that greets the view  
Is fair to see.

Sure, when these opening blossoms die,  
And fade in beauty to the eye,  
None shall deplore ;  
For in a clime secure and bright,  
Sustained by deathless air and light,  
They pine no more.

## Hell.

Oldham, in his 'Satires upon the Jesuits,' a work which would admit of a curious commentary, alludes to their 'lying legends,' and the innumerable impositions they practised on the credulous. I quote a few lines in which he has collected some of those legendary miracles, which I have noticed in the article on *Legends*, and the amours of the Virgin Mary are detailed in *Religious Nouvellettes*.

One undertakes by scales of miles to tell  
The bounds, dimensions, and extent of Hell ;  
How many German leagues that realm contains ;  
How many chaldrons Hell each year expends  
In coals for roasting Hugonots and friends.  
Another frights the route with useful stories  
Of wild Chimeras, limbos, Purgatories ;  
Where bloated souls, in smoky durance hung,  
Like a Westphalia gammon or neat's tongue,  
To be redeemed by masses and a song.

Satyr IV.

The readers of Oldham, for Oldham must ever have readers among the curious in our poetry, have been greatly disappointed in the pompous edition of a Capt. Thompson, which illustrates none of his allusions. In the above lines Oldham alludes to some singular works.

Treatises and topographical descriptions of Hell, purgatory, and even Heaven, were once the favourite researches among certain zealous defenders of the Romish churches, who exhausted their ink-horns in building up a Hell to their own taste, or for their particular purpose. We have a treatise of Cardinal Bellarmine, a Jesuit, on Purgatory ; he seems to have the science of a surveyor, among all the secret tracks and the formidable divisions of 'the bottomless pit.'

Bellarmin informs us that there are beneath the earth four different places, or a profound place divided into four parts. The deepest of these places is Hell ; it contains all the souls of

the damned, where will be also their bodies after the resurrection, and likewise all the demons. The nearest Hell is Purgatory, where souls are purged, or rather where they appease the anger of God by their sufferings. He says, that the same fires and the same torments are alike in both these places, the only difference between Hell and Purgatory consisting in their duration. Next to Purgatory is the limbo for those infants who die without having received the sacraments ; and the fourth place is the limbo of the fathers ; that is to say, of those just men who died before the death of Christ. But since the days of the Redeemer, this last division is empty, like an apartment to be let. A later catholic theologian, the famous Tillemont, condemns all the illustrious pagans to the eternal torments of Hell ! because they lived before the time of Jesus, and therefore could not be benefited by the redemption ! Speaking of young Tiberius who was compelled to fall on his sword, Tillemont adds, 'Thus by his own hand he ended his miserable life, to begin another, the misery of which will never end !' Yet history records nothing bad of this prince. Jortin observes that he added this reflection in his later edition, so that the good man as he grew older grew more uncharitable in his religious notions. It is in this manner too that the Benedictine editor of Justin Martyr speaks of the illustrious pagans. This father, after highly applauding Socrates, and a few more who resembled him, inclines to think they are not fixed in Hell. But the Benedictine editor takes great pains to clear the good father from the shameful imputation of supposing that a virtuous pagan might be saved as well as a Benedictine monk ! For a curious specimen of this odium theologum, see the censure of the Sorbonne or Marmontel's Belisarius.

The adverse party, who were either philosophers or reformers, received all such information with great suspicion. Anthony Cornelius, a lawyer in the 16th century, wrote a small tract, which was so effectually suppressed, as a monster of atheism, that a copy is now only to be found in the hands of the curious. This author ridiculed the absurd and horrid doctrine of infant damnation, and was instantly decried as an atheist, and the printer prosecuted to his ruin ! Caelius Secundus Curio, a noble Italian, published a treatise *De Amplitudine beati regni Dei*, to prove that Heaven has more inhabitants than Hell, or in his own phrase that the elect are more numerous than the reprobate. However we may incline to smile at these works, their design was benevolent. They were the first streaks of the morning light of the Reformation. Even such works assisted mankind to examine more closely, and hold in greater contempt, the extravagant and pernicious doctrine of the domineering papistical church.—*Curiosities of Literature.*

## Piety.

There is scarcely any word, which religious people have occasion to use, that has been more violated, in its meaning, than the one at the head of this article. It was early introduced into the service of the church, and has been made to mean, what at any time, through all her variations and changes, she has pronounced Orthodoxy. To believe her creed and become devoted to her thousand schemes for aggrandizement and power, to bear her protection to her blinded votaries and her curses to her unyielding foes ; to pamper the pride and vanity

of those upon whose credulity she had fixed her fatal grasps, or join the crusade for the destruction of those who refuse an assent to her wretched dogmas—this has been, in past ages of the church, the sum and substance of true piety.

And such indeed, is the meaning of the term at the present time to a considerable extent, in the religious world. To follow the religious fashion—to join 'our church,' decorate 'our splendid meeting house,' believe every thing 'our minister' says, and think he knows more than everybody else, to go and come and give our money at his bidding—to hide the faults of the church, and trumpet abroad aggravated and magnified, the foibles of others ; to dress in gay clothing, embellished with starched laces and gay ribbons, and then walk on tiptoe—this constitutes a vast amount of the piety of the pious world.

That to be ardently devoted to the popular theology of the day, is to a great extent at least the principle evidence of piety required, we need only observe the following fact—viz. Let a person who, for many years, has been eminent for his faithfulness and zeal in the church, and whose moral character has ever been above suspicion ; let this person renounce any of her leading doctrines and embrace others which he believes more worthy of a God of love, and better calculated to promote peace and virtue amongst men, and how soon do we see the church arrayed against him ! It is said he has lost his religion—his piety has left him—he has backslidden, and it will probably result in his final ruin. But what has the man really lost ? what has left him, and from what has he backslidden ? Has he lost his trust in God, and his love and reverence for his character ? No ; but he has lost his faith in a doctrine which robbed God of his glory and man of his comfort. Has his virtue, his benevolence, his charity forsook him ? No but the little stream has become a broad river. Once it was limited to 'our church ;' but now it extends to the great church of Christ which he has 'purchased with his blood.' In short, he has backslidden from nothing but the creed of the church, and yet he must be excommunicated with as much rigor and reproach as though he were guilty of the basest sins.

But, reader, forsake the creeds of men, with their fashions and their follies, and seek for instruction, where alone it is to be found, in the Gospel of the blessed Jesus, and you may yet learn the nature of genuine piety. In principle, it consists in a supreme love and veneration for the character of God. In practice, it consists in the exercise of love and benevolence to the world of mankind ; and he who entertains the most exalted conceptions of the love, goodness and mercy of God, and feels the most respect and reverence for his holy requirements ; and cherishes the deepest sympathy for the sorrows and miseries of the world, and does most to alleviate them, is the most faithful follower of the merciful Jesus, and possesses the most true piety.—*Pilot.*

## Marriages.

In this city (Hartford) by Rev. M. H. Smith, Rev. William A. Stickney of Berlin Ct. to Miss Mary Bolles of this city.

## Deaths.

In this city (Hartford) Mr. Elisha Shepherd Esq. aged 85.